

[Moving towards freedom, equality and justice | 2018 in review](#)

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Human rights defenders strive to ensure that all people can enjoy freedom, equality and justice.

They are the advocates who hold governments and bureaucrats accountable to the people they serve.

They are the activists who expose corporations which fail to operate responsibly and sustainably.

They are the dedicated individuals and non-profit organisations who work so that all people – even the most poor and marginalised – are able to access adequate housing and health care, fair and just conditions of work, and a healthy environment.

Clearly, defenders should be supported and celebrated. Instead, they are increasingly subject to stigmatisation, restriction and attack. They are attacked by the populist governments and unscrupulous corporations they hold to account, as well as by religious and other institutions whose power and prejudice they challenge.

ISHR is proud to serve defenders. We contribute to their protection when they are at risk. We expand and strengthen their networks. And we provide them with powerful platforms from which to expose violations, demand accountability, and push for justice.

We are only able to undertake this vital work thanks to our partners. With your solidarity and [support](#) – whether financial, political, legal or otherwise – ISHR made a significant and distinctive contribution to the capacities, recognition and protection of defenders over the last year. Here are just a few examples of our collective impact in 2018:

- We provided [intensive training and strategic advocacy support](#) to defenders from around the world, equipping them with the expertise and networks to use the international human rights system to achieve national level change.
- We [strengthened international law](#) and jurisprudence on the recognition and protection of defenders, including [women human rights defenders](#) and [migrant rights defenders](#).
- We focused international attention and pressure on the situation of defenders working in highly restrictive and repressive national environments, such as [China](#) (including in [Xinjiang](#)), [Egypt](#) and [Saudi Arabia](#), and highlighted situations and cases in the [international and national press](#).
- We worked with powerful and influential multinational corporations, as well as with [FIFA](#), to secure their [high-level commitment to respect and protect defenders](#), even defenders who oppose and protest against their activities.
- We partnered with national actors in a wide range of countries – from [Guinea](#) to [Jamaica](#), from [Colombia](#) to [Tunisia](#), and from [Mali](#) to [the Philippines](#) – to secure a safe and enabling environment for defenders' vital work.

Thanks for supporting ISHR and making this change happen! And thanks especially to those of you who have [already generously donated to our end of year appeal!](#)

As the year draws to a close, I am so proud of the work of my colleagues at ISHR, together with our partners around the globe, towards a world which is more fair, just, compassionate and peaceful.

In solidarity with them, and with you.

Phil Lynch

Director

*PS. Just a reminder that in many countries 31 December marks the end of the financial year. So if you're looking to **make that last minute donation** or give that last minute gift, there's still time!*

Photo: ISHR

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